



Kansas African American Affairs Commission

Annual Retreat and August General Meeting (Approved)

Landon State Office Building (LSOB) 105

Wednesday, August 24, 2011

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

- I. **Called to Order, Welcome and the Occasion** (10:34 a.m.) – Chairperson Dandridge
- II. **Roll Call and Introduction of Guests:** D. Dandridge, C. Coggs, J. Barfield, N. Terrell, V. Knight, J. Williams Staff Present – M. Edwards Intern: Shauntel Pearson Guest: Senator David Haley
- III. **Minutes:** A reading of May 12, 2011 General Meeting Minutes was held and approved unanimously.
- IV. **Introduction:** Intern Shauntel Pearson provided the Commission with an update of her project and areas in which she will be providing assistance.

Meeting recessed briefly for lunch at 11:30. Meeting reconvened for working lunch 12:00 pm – Catered by Mr. Goodcents. Photographer was present to update Commissioner headshots for the website.

Retreat Agenda

- V. **Collaborating with the Kansas Black Legislative Caucus:** **Senator David Haley** recommended that the Commission continue its policy related work in the area of racial profiling stating “two Kansas’s are not in the best interest of our democracy”. Revisions to SB93, pre-textual stops, and visual inequities apparent in courtroom cases (due to limited access to resources to pay for legal fines and attorneys, literacy challenges, and apparent illness) were noted as areas for intervention. He also recommended that the Caucus and the Commission meeting regularly to discuss related to legislators to approach and suggested that our advocacy and involvement focus on the areas of health, education, access to legal resources and redistricting.

VI. Governors Cabinet Equity Dialogue

Kansas Dept. of Commerce – Darla Price, PEAK Program Manager informed the Commission that our strategic plans are greatly aligned in the areas of workforce development (jobs) and minority business development. Skilled employees as electric linemen and in waste water, welding, mechanics, wind energy and manufacturing were emphasized as needed.

New business finance initiatives involves the recruitment of new companies to the State, and new start-up business and business expansion/capacity building resources within the State. The

Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK) program will feature opportunities for new start ups: 1) retain 95% of withholding tax for relocating companies (since 2009), and since 2010 included those moving to new locations within the State as well as newly relocated from outside of Kansas. Beginning in 2013 those that can document that they have moved away will be able to return and participate. Companies must document ten (10) new jobs over 2 years or five (5) new jobs over 2 years in the metropolitan area with salaries no less than minimum wage. Training funds for new employees – restructuring or bringing on new product lines – are available in matching fund applications through Network Kansas.

Minority and Women owned business development division provides certification, information, and serves as a referral source for new start ups with 51% ownership in either category. Net worth must not exceed 1 million for women owned business; no limits for minority owned.

Juvenile Justice Authority – Commissioner Curtis Whitten informed the Commission of the following five (5) policy initiatives:

- 1) Mentoring initiative – goal is to work w/faith based and other community organizations to identify and recruit local community leaders who will help form a grassroots network of mentors for JJA offenders and to collaborate with those organizations to form a sustainable mentoring program in KS for every offender.
- 2) Graduation initiative (SB23) – advocate legislation enacting recommendation 4 of the January 2011 Revised Final Report of the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery – A State of KS diploma should be awarded to students who are under the custody of the Secretary of SRS or the Commissioner of JJA on or after their 17th birthday and who have achieved the minimum state credit requirements.
- 3) Annie E. Casey Foundation Program – Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative seeks to help youth involved in the juvenile justice system develop into healthy, productive adults through policies and programs that maximize their chance for success, reduce their likelihood of incarceration, and minimize the risk they pose to their communities. Changes to JDAI policies, practices, and programs to: Reduce reliance on secure confinement; improve public safety; reduce racial disparities and bias; save taxpayers' dollars; and stimulate overall juvenile justice reforms.
- 4) Foster Care Initiative - Goal is to make placement of juvenile offenders in foster care a priority before other group housing options are utilized.
- 5) Improvement of Inspections of JJA Contracted Residential Providers – Goal is to establish consistency in inspections of JJA contracted residential providers and to provide a model of best practices to KDHE inspectors.

Kansas Department of Corrections – Larochelle Young, Consultant

Mentoring for Success prison reform/recidivism project based on the Second Chance Act co-authored by then Senator, now Governor Brownback. Intent of project is to prepare individuals to return to society after completing their sentence and reduce recidivism. Project is spearheaded by KDOC, Governors Office and Reaching Out From Within collaborative steering committee. Given

the disparate number of African Americans in prison mentors are needed 6 – 12 months prior and 6 months after release. The goal of the project is to have as many individuals coming out that would like a mentor to be matched; esp. where families many not have the proper resources housing, jobs, reunification, etc. State is divided into six (6) regions (loosely based on Congressional districts) with steering committees and a lead organization for each region will be responsible for recruiting and training mentors.

Kansas Department of Health and Environment – Secretary Moser and Center for Health Equity – Executive Director, Aiko Allen

Health disparities were defined as “differences that out not to be” and where we eat and play impacts health status was noted. Kansas Blue Ribbon Panel data on infant mortality was presented to highlight the tremendous disparity for African American women (worst rate in the nation) and to define the issue as a priority for the agency in which the Commissions’ help is needed. An introduction of the organizational goals and strategic plan was presented. An overview of the State Partnership Grant Program and National Partnership for Action was also provided.

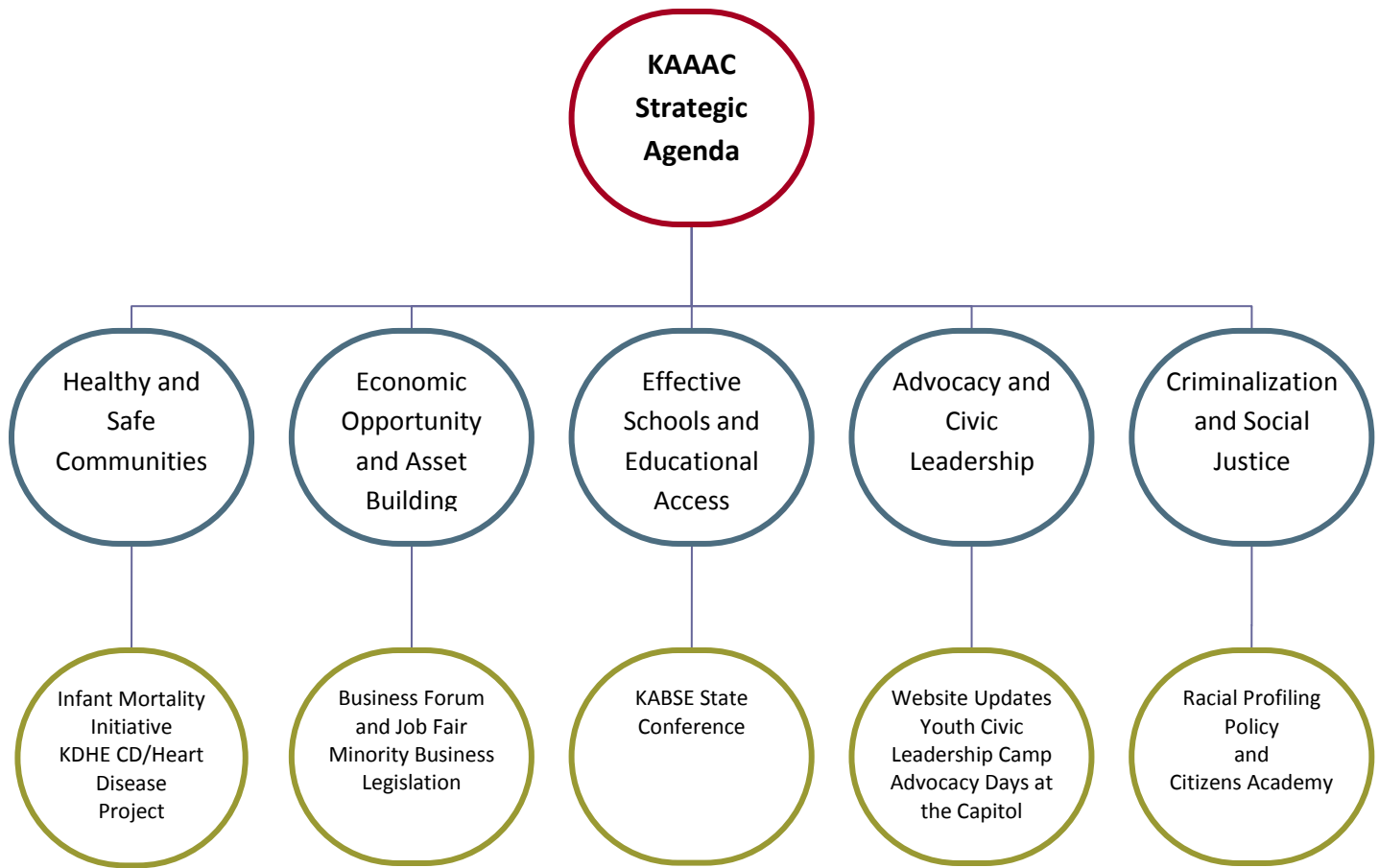
Kansas State Department of Education – Commissioner Diane Debacker

Reading and math proficiency rates were presented and discussed. Student achievement overall is going up from 60% to 73% in reading, 50.9% to 67.5% in math. Attendance rates are 94.1% and graduation 65.6% with 3,000 documented drop outs overall (2.2%). African American males have the highest drop out rate 2.8%. Out-migration problematic with tracking needed for all students statewide.

The strategic agenda for KSDE includes the following goals: 1) increase graduation rates, 2) decrease dropout rate, train and recruit better teachers, focus on making student career and college ready through improved common core standards. Emphasis was placed on the need to reform the assessment process to document student success and to include programs that ensure students leave school with documented community service hours. The need to review diplomas plus industry recognized certifications was also noted.

VII. Overview of Existing projects – Dr. Mildred Edwards

A review of the Commission mission was provided along with a display of existing projects by category of strategic engagement. See diagram on next page.



VIII. Crafting Our Strategic Agenda: Commissioners reviewed the existing projects and those presented by the panel of presenters for collaboration. The top three (3) areas to be added to the above strategic agenda include: KDOC Mentoring for Success, JJA Mentoring Project and the Department of Commerce Minority Business Initiative.

IX. Announcements: Intern Rachel Lantis provided the Commission with an overview of her project working to analyze data and contribute to the writing of the State of AA in KS document.

X. Adjournment at 2:00 pm by Chairperson Deborah Dandridge.

Submitted by, Mildred Edwards

The August 24, 2011 KAAAC Retreat and Board Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously November 15, 2011 with the following corrections:

- Absent members should be recorded in the official minutes of the organization